

Hampton Gardener's House
535 Hampton Lane
Southwest of Hampton Mansion
Hampton National Historic Site
Towson
Baltimore County
Maryland

HABS No. MD-226-V

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. MD-226-V

HAMPTON GARDENER'S HOUSE

Location: 535 Hampton Lane, southwest of Hampton Mansion,
Hampton National Historic Site, Towson,
Baltimore County, Maryland

Present Owner: U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park
Service

Present Occupant Mr. William Barnes

Present Use: Caretaker's residence

Statement of
Significance: This small structure housed various gardeners
who were instrumental in maintaining the vast
Hampton gardens through the last half of the
nineteenth century.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: The tract of land on which the Gardener's House was built had been acquired in 1745 by Colonel Charles Ridgely from Clement and Ann Hill. The 1500 acre tract, "Northampton," had been inherited by Ann Hill from her father, Henry Darnall, who had patented it in 1695. Captain Charles Ridgely, Colonel Ridgely's son, inherited the property in 1772 after his father's death. Captain Ridgely, for whom Hampton Mansion was built, died in 1790. In accordance with his will, nephew Charles Carnan assumed title to much of the estate and the Ridgely name. On January 17, 1791, widow Rebecca Ridgely signed an agreement with Charles Carnan Ridgely to exchange a tract of land and a house for her rights, claims and interest to Hampton. The estate was inherited by Charles Carnan Ridgely's second son, John, in 1829, as his first son, Charles, had died in 1819. After John's death in 1867, the estate was inherited by his son, Charles, who bequeathed it to his son, John, in 1872. The estate was left to John Ridgely, Jr. in 1938, who sold the mansion to the Avalon Foundation in 1946. The foundation subsequently transferred it to the National Park Service in 1948 under the condition that the Society for the Preservation of Maryland Antiquities would maintain the estate after it was restored by the Park Service.

2. Date of erection: The earliest section of the house seems to have been built in the early nineteenth century. A west addition was constructed in 1855.
3. Architect: Unknown
4. Construction information: On October 18, 1855, according to the Ridgely accounts, O.W. Eichelberger was paid \$50.000 "To pay Ady [?] for gardener's house." On October 25, George Houser was paid \$45.62 "for plastering gardener's house." \$50.00 was paid on February 18, 1856, to Joseph Allison for "building gardener's house."
5. Alterations and additions: After the mid nineteenth century addition, the Gardener's House was rehabilitated by the National Park Service in 1949-1950 to provide quarters for the Society for the Preservation of Maryland Antiquities' caretaker.
6. Important old views: The Joshua Barney Map of 1843 of Hampton indicates the "Gardener's House," approximately half the size of the existing structure, and shows the cellar vestibule.

- B. Historic Events and Persons Connected with the Structure: In addition to the historical data noted for Hampton Mansion (HABS No. MD-226-A), the Ridgely account books reveal that the gardeners of Hampton played an important role in the maintenance of the estate. However, it is not known specifically whether or not the gardeners worked at providing food stuffs or tended ornamental horticulture. Captain Charles Ridgely had among his ninety-two "white servants" between 1772 and 1774 two gardeners, James Barber, who was English, and John Fowlloe, who was Irish. Ridgely paid Thomas Todd with fencing material for gardening in 1773. James Lennox trimmed 772 apple trees for which he was paid ten pounds. After the Revolutionary War John Willis appeared as a gardener in the accounts and was generally paid in commodities. In 1784 Ridgely acquired the indenture of a Daniel Healy, a gardener from Ireland.

Charles Carnan Ridgely employed several gardeners at various times after he acquired the estate in 1791. Included were John Ludley who worked in the garden for 211 days in 1793, William Bartlett who was paid forty-five guineas per annum in 1796, Edward Nagle who worked in 1797, and John Lindley who worked 440 days in 1798 and 1799. Between 1802 and 1807 Bartholomew Flarity and Gerard Gibson worked as gardeners.

During the John Ridgely period, between 1829 and 1867, Dan Harris was listed as a gardener in 1830. James Galbraith was listed as a gardener in 1852. By 1854 and 1855 others were listed with Galbraith and James Cowan was "under-gardeners." Included were John Zimmerman, James Reid and Peter Reid. In 1858 Peter Reid was listed as the gardener with several undergardeners. Alexander Fraser was a gardener in 1863. During that year James Galbraith returned to Hampton, as it was noted that \$7.50 was paid for "expenses of gardener from New York." \$6.00 was paid for an advertisement for a gardener in the New York Herald. The advertisement may have produced A. Gerisher who was listed as the gardener in 1867. The need for gardeners continued through the nineteenth century and by 1875 a large staff was surely needed to maintain the gardens as they were described in Appleton's Journal in an article entitled "An Old Maryland Mansion," by J. C. Carpenter.

"The south front falls away in terraces, and the lawn and flower garden are flanked on one side by the conservatories and the orangery, on the other side by a high thick wall of clipped cedar, beyond which lie the kitchen gardens, the orchards, and...the family vault.

"The first terrace, which is merely an extension of the ground on which the house stands is broad and spacious, ornamented with orange and lemon trees in bearing and clumping pyramidal Norway spruces of great age.

"At the edge of the slope, among the grouped trees seats are placed and from them the outlook over the Italian garden is most beautiful--rich in color and novel in effect. There is several acres, and the terraces have a gentle incline, while down the middle there goes a broad avenue of smooth turf, branching off at every side into smaller avenues. ...on all sides lies the flower-garden, for which Hampton is noted, and for which rare plants often come from France and England. Though laid out in geometrical figures, the stiffness of the old fashion is relieved and modernized.

"In terrace after terrace, strictly kept distinct in masses of color, eight thousand plants are bedded out."

The "Italian" garden appears to have maintained through 1903 when it was recorded by Laurence Hall Fowler, FAIA, for House and Garden Magazine. By the time the mansion and the adjoining grounds were sold in 1946, the formal plantings had largely disappeared.

D. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources: The Ridgely family papers are indexed by Avril J. M. Pedley in The Manuscript Collections of the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, 1968. Contained are eight collection numbers which list eighty-seven volumes and approximately thirty-five boxes of loose material.
2. Secondary and published sources: Charles E. Peterson's Notes on Hampton Mansion, published by the Department of the Interior, National Park Service in 1970, contains a section on the gardens of Hampton.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The stone masonry Gardener's House is a small, two-story, gabled roof structure which was doubled in size in the mid nineteenth century. At the first floor of the older, east structure at the north and south elevations the doorways are flanked by window openings. Two bays are at each corresponding second floor elevation. The west structure north and south elevations each have two bays.
2. Condition of the fabric: Fair

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 42'-2" x 16'-3"
2. Foundations: Stone
3. Wall construction, finish and color: The house is constructed of rubble stone masonry which is stuccoed except at the south wall of the west structure where the masonry is exposed showing the construction, including stone voussoirs set over the first floor masonry openings. The stucco is painted a light buff color.
4. Structural system: Exposed in the basement of the east structure are 3"x8" floor joists, 21" on center, which span between the north and south masonry bearing walls.

5. Porches: A one-story, 4'-5" wide porch extends around the north and west elevations and is supported on stone walls which extend perpendicularly from the main structure and diagonally from the northwest corner. The champhered columns which support the roof structure appear to be salvaged material, as they have been shortened. Original handrail mortises indicated a rail with a half round top. A similar railing is toenailed into the columns above the mortises along with intermediate and bottom railings. The columns have plain beveled caps which do not appear to be original. Each bay is spaced with a newel which receives the span of the railings. Two wooden steps rise to the central north bay to the porch floor of narrow boards which are crushed under the weight of the modern metal supports under each column. The porch ceiling is sheathed with narrow, random width, spaced boards. A kitchen porch is located on the south elevation of the east structure and has a shed roof supported on plain corner columns. A flight of wooden steps rises to the porch which has plain railings. Extending from the east elevation and flush with the south elevation is a brick cellar entrance with a gable roof and an east doorway. The eaves are boxed and a barge board extends up the verges.
6. Chimneys: The wider east chimney at the roof ridge behind the verges has a corbeled cap as does the similarly located but smaller west chimney.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: At the north entrance to the east structure a board and batten door constructed from beaded boards is hung within a typical beaded frame set into the masonry opening. The south doorway has been narrowed and is hung with a nine-light over two-panel door. The north doorway into the west structure has a modern, fully glazed door with eighteen lights. At the cellar entrance there are a pair of board and batten doors hung in a wide, solid-stock beaded frame of mortise and tenon construction at the head.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Typically, the first floor window openings at the north and south elevations have six-over-six light sash hung in plain frames with beaded inner edges. The plain sills of the east structure are flush with the masonry, while the sills of the west structure extend into the masonry jambs and project slightly from the walling. At the second

floor of the west structure six-over-three light sash fill the openings. Pairs of casement sash with three lights in each leaf fill the window openings of the east structure. Centered in the north elevation of the west structure is a small gable which breaks the main eave and contains a fanlight window with four radiating lights around a semicircular central light. At the east elevation below the gable end at the second floor, four-light casement sash fill small, square low window openings, one on either side of the chimney breast.

A Palladian window motif fills the west gable end. The window has two-over-two light sidelights and six-over-four lights in the central opening, which is semicircularly arched at the head. This window, which is blacked out and backed by the west chimney breast, has false meeting rails. The cellar windows have three-light sash.

Cast iron pintles for shutters or blinds exist at most of the window openings.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape and covering: The gable roof has dark composition shingles laid over earlier shingles of undetermined material.
- b. Cornice and eaves: At the eaves of the roof are scalloped fascia boards which extend up the gable verges in an inclined scallop pattern. The soffits are boxed and a small crown moulding completes the detailing. The main porch roof eave has exposed rafter ends.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: Under the east structure a two-room basement has access from the east entrance. A brick chimney breast, which provided a fireplace for the smaller west room, separates the two rooms. The east chimney breast provided a large fireplace in the east room. Access to the west structure crawl space is through a masonry opening in the west wall.

- b. First floor: The floor plan consists of three linear rooms which includes an east kitchen, a small middle room used for dining, and a large west living room which contains the stairway to the second floor. The east chimney breast projects into the kitchen. The west chimney breast projects into the living room.
 - c. Second floor: The stairway from the living room rises to a narrow hallway which opens to the west into a large bedroom with closets on either side of the chimney breast. From the hallway, one step up, to the east is a room, corresponding to the dining room below, which is partitioned to provide a south bathroom. The north area opens into a large bedroom over the kitchen and has a crudely built closet at the north side of the chimney breast.
- 2. Stairways: A stairway rises three steps from the living room and turns with winders in the southeast corner to a straight run extending to the stairhall. A closet under the upper run opens into the living room. Modern knotty pine paneling forms the closed stringer of the upper run which lacks hand railings. A ship ladder descends to the basement in the cellar entrance. Evidence of an earlier stairway exists in the ceiling framing of the smaller cellar room in the northeast corner.
 - 3. Flooring: The basement floor is concrete. At the first floor the kitchen has, as revealed in the cellar, modern narrow floor boarding which like all the floors in the house is covered with linoleum. Narrow random width flooring is in the dining room.
 - 4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls of the basement are plastered above and below the at grade offset of the foundation walls. The ceiling of the large east room is exposed joists and flooring. In the small room the floor joists and the undersides of the flooring have been whitewashed. The walls and ceilings of the first floor are plastered, except at the stairway as previously noted. At the second floor, where the walls and ceilings are also plastered, the slope of the roof structure forms a shallow camp ceiling.
 - 5. Doorways and doors: All the interior doors at the first

floor have been removed except at the closets. The living room closet has a four-panel door with plain raised panels and panel moulding. A board and batten door is hung at the shallow dining room cupboard built into the wall structure of the stairway. Four-panel doors with plain raised panels without mouldings are hung at the west bedroom closets and doorway. Board and batten doors are hung within plain board trimmed frames at the other second floor doorways.

6. Special decorative features: A mantel shelf supported on brackets is ghosted at the east basement fireplace. At the first floor in the kitchen a quirked cyma backband moulding is set around the original masonry openings, which have plain beaded aprons below the window sills. The dining room doorway has a different backband moulding similar in profile to backband moulding of the mid nineteenth century architrave trim, which has a beaded fascia, found in the dining room, the living room, and the west bedroom. In the living room a plain chimney piece has a beaded inner edge around the firebox, which is closed, and a mantel shelf which has a moulded edge. Typically throughout the house the baseboarding is stepped near the top.
7. Hardware: Where existing, the doors, typically hung on butt hinges, have cast iron box locks with porcelain knobs. The second floor closet doors have plain keyhole escutcheons and simple lock mechanisms. A wrought iron thumb latch exists at the cellar door.
8. Mechanical equipment: The lighting is modern incandescent. A modern furnace located in the basement heats the house. All the fireplaces, one in each end room, have been closed.

- D. Site and Surroundings: The Gardener's House is located southwest of Hampton Mansion (HABS No. MD-226-A) near the south edge of the property where it adjoins the Baltimore Beltway right-of-way. Almost due south of the Carriage House (HABS No. MD-226-P), the Gardener's House is surrounded by lawn and has access from the Carriage House drive by boards laid flush at grade.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was initially financed with funds from the "Mission 66" Program of the National Park Service under the direction of Charles E. Peterson, Supervising Architect, Historic Structures. Hampton Mansion was measured in 1958 by Student Assistant Architects Orville W. Carroll (University of Oregon), Harold A. Nelson (University of Michigan), and Trevor Nelson (M.I.T.), with Professor Lee H. Nelson (University of Illinois) as Project Supervisor. The complex was measured and drawn in 1959 by Student Assistant Architects Charles C. Boldrick (University of Notre Dame), Richard C. Mehring (University of Virginia) and Herbert L. Banks (University of Florida), with Professor F. Blair Reeves (University of Florida) as Project Supervisor.

The project was edited in 1972-73 by Rodd L. Wheaton, Architect, Historic American Buildings Survey, who prepared the historical data, edited and expanded the 1959 architectural data and recorded several structures which were previously unrecorded.